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IN THE APPLICATION.

OF

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FOR A

BANJO AND GUITAR STAND

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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/412,553, filed September 23, 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a portable folding banjo and guitar stand.

2. DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART

Guitars and banjos have always been popular musical instruments. Whether being transported in an instrument case or carried alone, guitars and banjos have always been very mobile musical instruments. Like most musical instruments, guitars and banjos also use instrument stands to secure them in place, with

many types of guitar and banjo stands being well-known and reflected in the related art.

U.S. Pat. No. 1,673,205 issued to Romao, outlines the use of a banjo stand in combination with a cloth protector, which is easily applied to the banjo stand, which also protects the banjo from direct contact with the stand when both are used and assembled. The banjo stand also conveniently folds-up and easily stores with the cloth protector in most banjo cases.

U.S. Pat. No. 4,943,021 issued to Cien et al., outlines the use of a compact collapsible portable guitar stand that has a rear support leg, a backrest support leg and a pair of lateral side support legs, all of which are pivotally secured to a T-hinge assembly. A pair of support arms having upright members on their front ends each have their rear ends pivotally secured to the hinge assembly and they function to support the bottom end of a guitar.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,197,701 issued to Olson, outlines the use of a musical instrument stand for enabling the instrument to remain in an upright position when not in use and be retained on the instrument when the instrument is in use.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,350,143 issued to Hoshino, outlines the use of a collapsible stand for use in supporting a guitar or other

similar object. The stand includes a top main member and a central leg which is pivotable forwardly and rearwardly of the main member. In the forward position, the central leg is in a supporting position. Right and left side legs are provided to the left and right of the central leg and the side legs are pivotable outwardly away from the central leg.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,375,497 issued to Pirchio et al., outlines the use of an adjustable portable stand for supporting an elongated instrument by its base in a generally upright orientation, which includes a multiple leg assembly and first and second vertically extending rigid legs. First and second supports project outwardly from the first and second legs for cooperatively supporting the base of an elongated instrument. Each of the supports are independently adjustable along the longitudinal axis of its respective leg and are fixable at a selected point.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,383,634 issued to Liao, outlines the use of a collapsible guitar stand, which includes a top member having two bottom holes spaced by a bottom frame, with two front legs pivotably connected to either bottom hole of the top member, a back leg pivotably connected to a longitudinal groove on the

bottom frame and two supporting rods pivotably connected to oblong holes on the front legs to hold a guitar on.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,497,689 issued to Hoshino, outlines the use of a generally U-shaped body with the U-opening towards the front side of the stand. A pair of front legs are attached to the left and right front sides of the stand and are rotatable left and right at their journaled attachment to the front of the body. Left and right rear legs are attached to the left and right ends toward the rear side of the body and are journaled to swing forward and rearward.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,744,735 issued to Liao, outlines the use of a folding guitar stand which includes a top member and two legs pivotably connected to a hollow bottom side of the top member. Two connecting rods are pivotably connected to the legs for supporting the guitar and two foot members respectively fixed to the legs at the bottom, with each foot member having two balance rods being pivotal in opposite directions for supporting the stand on the ground.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,957,417 issued to Yu, outlines the use of a guitar stand that has an adjustment joint, a support rod connected to the adjustment joint and two outer pipes receiving the inner pipes respectively. Two leg joints are connected to

the outer pipes and two leg rods are connected to the leg joints, while two brackets are disposed on the inner pipes respectively.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,959,225 issued to Hsu, outlines the use of a guitar rack structure that is made up of a fixing plate and two leg stands, each of the leg stands are tightened by a screw onto the right and left parts of the fixing plate. There is an additional fitting of a length adjustable upright rod onto the fixing plate, with the top end of the upright rod having a Y-shaped fork.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,296,213 issued to Law, III et al., outlines the use of a musical instrument stand which can hold a number of musical instruments by a supporting structure that partly includes the structure of a case having top and bottom halves that are hinged together. The top and bottom halves are pivoted open to place the top half in a substantially vertical position, where the top half holds a supporting yoke for holding an instrument, such as the neck of a guitar resting against a pad in the bottom half of the structure.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,323,406 issued to Park, outlines the use of a guitar stand used to prominently display guitars and more particularly, to a guitar stand that is light and is easily

folded so as to obtain convenience in storing and carrying a guitar. The guitar stand is capable of sustaining the guitar in a stable fashion, so as to stand it up against a certain degree of impact. The guitar stand also allows advertisements to appear on its front plate so as to improve its advertisement effect.

Although each of these patents outline useful and unique devices, many have the problem of scratching the musical instrument that they are displaying and can also be cumbersome to carry with the musical instrument. If a sturdy and portable banjo and guitar stand were available that was compact and were made of materials that would not damage the banjo or guitar being displayed, it would be useful to a great number of banjo and guitar players in the marketplace.

None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to describe the instant invention as claimed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention is a folding banjo and guitar stand made-up of a first inverted U-shaped bar, with an upper portion and a

lower portion, that acts as a rear support for a banjo or a guitar being secured in an upright position by a second inverted U-shaped bar, with an upper portion and a lower portion, that is attached to the lower portion of the first inverted U-shaped bar and two folding support hinges that attach the upper portion of the first inverted U-shaped bar to the upper portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar. The folding banjo and guitar stand is also foldable, lightweight and is designed to protect a secured instrument and ground surfaces from scratching and damage.

Accordingly, it is a principal object of the invention to provide a portable folding banjo and guitar stand.

It is another object of the invention to provide a portable folding banjo and guitar stand that can fold up for easy transport.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a lightweight portable folding banjo and guitar stand that won't scratch the surface it is resting on.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a portable folding banjo and guitar stand that can hold an instrument without scratching the instrument.

It is an object of the invention to provide improved elements and arrangements thereof in an apparatus for the purposes described which is inexpensive, dependable and fully effective in accomplishing its intended purposes.

These and other objects of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is an environmental, perspective view of a banjo and guitar stand according to the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a front side perspective view of a banjo and guitar stand that is in an open position.

Fig. 3 is front perspective view of a banjo and guitar stand that is folded-up.

Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The present invention is a folding banjo and guitar stand **10**, that can secure a banjo or guitar **B** or **G** in an upright position. The folding banjo and guitar stand **10** is shown in Fig. **1** holding a banjo in place. Note that the folding banjo and guitar stand **10** can also secure a guitar **G** in place, as well as a banjo **B**.

The folding banjo and guitar stand **10** comprises a first inverted U-shaped bar **20**, with an upper and middle portion **22** and a lower portion with two ends **24**, that acts as a rear support for a banjo or a guitar **B** or **G** being secured in an upright position. There is also a second inverted U-shaped bar **30**, with an upper portion **32** and a lower portion with two ends **34**, that is attached to the lower portion of the first inverted U-shaped bar **24** with a bolt **26** and a spacing device **28**. There are two folding support hinges **40** that attach the upper portion of the first inverted U-shaped bar **22** to the upper portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar **32**.

The folding banjo and guitar stand **10** is depicted in an open position in Fig. **2**. The two folding support hinges **40** can lock in a single position, enabling the second inverted U-shaped

bar 30 and the two folding support hinges 40 to support the first inverted U-shaped bar 20 in a locked upright position. Note that the lower portion of the first inverted U-shaped bar 24 and the lower portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar 34 are both resting securely on the ground, while the folding banjo and guitar stand 10 is in the open position. It is only in the open position that the folding banjo and guitar stand 10 can secure a banjo or guitar B or G. Note that each end 36 of the lower portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar 34 is turned-up to insure that the bottom of a banjo or a guitar B or G being supported by the folding banjo and guitar stand 10 cannot slide off of the lower portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar 34. The lower portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar 34 extends perpendicularly from the lower portion of the first inverted U-shaped bar 24 to hold the bottom of a banjo or guitar B or G being secured by the folding banjo and guitar stand 10.

The lower portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar 34 is also provided with a cushioned thermoplastic coating that protects the banjo or guitar B or G from damage to exposed metal and keeps the banjo or guitar B or G from sliding off of the folding banjo and guitar stand 10. Similarly, most of the front surface of the first inverted U-shaped bar 20 above the lower

portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar **34** is also provided with a cushioned thermoplastic coating to further protect the banjo or guitar **B** or **G** being secured by the folding banjo and guitar stand **10**. The very end of the lower portion of the first inverted U-shaped bar **24** is also provided with a thermoplastic covering **29** to prevent the folding banjo and guitar stand **10** from sliding on a slippery bottom surface or scratching a bottom surface.

The two folding support hinges **40** can be folded-up to bring the second inverted U-shaped bar **30** into a flat planar position within the first inverted U-shaped bar **20**, as is depicted in Fig. 3. This makes the folding banjo and guitar stand **10** easier and more convenient to carry in a briefcase, bag or guitar or banjo case. The spacer **28** provided between the first inverted U-shaped bar **20** and the second inverted U-shaped bar **30** provides enough room for the entire pair of folding support hinges **40** to fit between the first inverted U-shaped bar **20** and the second inverted U-shaped bar **30**. The folding support hinges **40** are attached to the first inverted U-shaped bar **20** and the second inverted U-shaped bar **30** with a pop rivet and washer assembly **50**, that acts like a bearing to reduce wear and tear. The folding support hinges **40** can lock the folding banjo and guitar

stand 10 into place or bend at the middle joint 60 to fold the second inverted U-shaped bar 30 into a flat, planar carrying position, as is depicted in Fig. 3.

The folding banjo and guitar stand 10 folds-up to about 1" in thickness and weighs less than 2 pounds. The first inverted U-shaped bar 20 and the second inverted U-shaped bar 30 are made of shaped flat iron and the folding support hinges 40 are rust resistant metal. The cushioned thermoplastic material used to protect the banjo or guitar B or G being secured are well-known to those schooled in the related art, as is the thermoplastic material provided on the ends 29 of the lower portion of the second inverted U-shaped bar 34. The entire folding banjo and guitar stand 10 is approximately 10" wide and 16" high.

It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the sole embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.